

### ISLAM

# Start change with the individual

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

It requires consolidation before expansion

A tree is a unique phenomenon of nature. The roots of a tree go deep into the soil and its stem and branches rise above and spread out into the open. This phenomenon of nature is mentioned in the Quran in these words: "Do you not see how God compares a good word to a good tree? Its root is firm and its branches are in the sky, it yields its fruit each season with its Lord's permission—God makes such comparisons for people, in order that they may take heed." (14:24-25)

This principle of nature is also applicable to the human world. That is, real change in human life can be brought about by following a principle demonstrated in the natural world: first consolidation and then expansion. Here, consolidation means to firmly establish one's base in the ground, while expansion means to spread out all over the world after gaining strength from the groundwork done before.

Many people speak of social change or social reform. If you want to bring about real change in society, first of all you will have to change individual life. For example, if you want to successfully establish a political system, you will have to train people's minds in a way that they develop acceptability for that system.

Similarly, if you want to run successful institutions, first of all you will need to educate individual minds in order that you have competent people for running these institutions. Individuals are the base of any social building. If you want to bring about change in society, you have to begin your work from individuals.

Building an institution without forming a base is like making sandcastles, which do not have a lasting existence.

[www.cpsglobal.org](http://www.cpsglobal.org)

---

This first appeared on 14 August 2016. The writer could not write this week due to unavoidable circumstances. His latest column will appear soon.